

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 19, 2004. Claims 1 to 20 are in the application, of which Claims 1, 10, 16 and 20 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The abstract has been amended as indicated above.

All of the dependent claims were objected to, based on use of the indefinite article "a" or "an" rather than the definite article "the". The objections are respectfully traversed since the claim language is perfectly consistent with that approved at MPEP § 608.01(n). No change has been made, and withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for allowance of Claims 10 to 15. The amendment to Claim 10 is not believed to affect allowability, but merely clarifies that a network transmission is transmitted after setting the isolation switch to a bypass mode.

Applicant also thanks the Examiner for his indication of allowable subject matter in dependent Claims 6 to 8, 18 and 19. It is noted that the Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance appear to pertain only to Claims 6 to 8, since the text underlined on page 7 of the Office Action does not appear in Claims 18 or 19. Clarification of this matter is respectfully requested, if this was not the intention of the Examiner.

Claims 1 to 5, 9, 16, 17 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the arrangement shown in Figure 2 of the subject application in view of U.S. Patent 6,754,826 (Challener). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The invention concerns an interface device for interfacing between a networkable device such as a printer and a network, and includes a hub and a circuit board.

The hub is constructed with plural ports that repeat network transmissions received on one port to one or more than one of all other ports. An isolation switch is provided for controllably isolating the port to which the network is connected so that network transmissions are not repeated by the hub. The isolation switch is operated under control of the circuit board, which implements network functionality for the networkable device.

By virtue of this arrangement, it is possible to isolate the networkable device from the remainder of the network under control of the circuit board which implements network functionality for the networkable device. For example, where the networkable device is a printer, the extended functionality provided by the circuit board may relate to secure printing, and the circuit board may accept encrypted print jobs and decrypt them for printout by the printer. In this case, the isolation switch can be operated so as to isolate the network from the printer, so as to permit the circuit board to transmit decrypted print jobs in clear text to the printer without danger of interception over the network. In this regard, the claims have been amended so as to clarify that data is transmitted after isolation by the isolation switch.

In entering the rejection of the claims, the Office Action conceded that Figure 2 of the subject application does not show any isolation switch. Instead, the Office Action relied on switch 32 shown in Challenger's Figure 1, and took the position that switch 32 corresponded to the claimed isolation switch. Applicant respectfully disagrees, and would respectfully point out that Challenger's switch 32 is not controllable from a circuit board which implements network functionality for a networkable device. Rather, Challenger's switch 32 is activated and deactivated based on on-board control circuitry such as that at ASIC 24, which is not seen to implement network functionality for Challenger's client 20.

Moreover, although it is true that Challenger describes a network switch 32 and a client switch 28, Applicant respectfully submits that these switches are not utilized like the claimed isolation switch, such that the arrangement of Challenger is different fundamentally from that of the present invention.

More particularly, network switch 32 is capable of prohibiting a network communication link between a network and an access connector 22 when the network switch 32 is open. When the access connector 22 transmits a unique identifier to a server 12 on the network, and a determination is made that a communication link between the access connector 22 and the server 12 is disapproved, the network switch 32 is opened to prohibit the communication link. In this configuration, access connector 22 cannot transmit data to the server.

Thus, Challenger differs from the invention also in the fact that access connector 22 does not transmit data after a connector 34 is isolated by the opened network switch 32. On the other hand, in the rejected claims of the subject application, a first port is isolated by the isolation switch whereafter the circuit board transmits data to another port.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the claims herein would not have been obvious from any permissible combination of Challenger with the applied art.

No other matters being raised, it is believed that the entire application is fully in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa office by telephone at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,


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